

'FOR THE LOVE OF...'

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

The impact of climate change is already being felt by millions of people around the world. Wild weather and unpredictable seasons are changing what farmers can grow and making people hungry. Food prices are going up. Food quality is going down. Climate change threatens to affect what farmers can grow and what all of us can eat.



A farmer field school in eastern Sierra Leone teaches farmers how to adapt their crops to changing weather patterns. Photo: John McLaverty/Oxfam.

Overwhelming scientific evidence shows that there have been changes in the global climate since the early 1900s. According to provisional figures for global average temperatures, 2015 was the warmest year in a record dating back to 1850.¹ The vast majority of scientists agree that these climate changes are largely a result of human activities and excessive greenhouse gas emissions, which are warming up the Earth. This is climate change, often referred to as *global warming*.

In the last two decades, there has been an increase in certain types of extreme weather events, notably erratic rainfall. This contributes to floods and droughts, as well as unpredictable seasons. The results are failed harvests, destroyed homes, water scarcity and deepening health crises. This means that many millions of people who were already struggling for sufficient food, water and shelter are finding it even more difficult. While not all extreme weather events can necessarily be attributed to human influences, scientists expect that climate change will increase their frequency and intensity.

Climate change affects everyone but many people in poorer countries are, and will continue to be, hit harder than many people in wealthier ones. People living in the most food-insecure regions of the world will be hit hardest of all. Ironically (and unfairly), the people who contribute the least to climate change are the ones who suffer the most.

¹ www.metoffice.gov.uk/news/releases/archive/2016/2015-global-temperature

The institution which coordinates the global response to climate change is the annual Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The objective of the 2015 COP Conference, which took place in Paris, was to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate from all the countries of the world. After years of campaigning and two whirlwind weeks of negotiations in Paris, world leaders from almost 200 countries agreed on a historic deal that sets the path for how our world will tackle climate change. Countries have pledged to keep global warming below 1.5°C, with a long term goal to reduce global emissions to zero.

Although a huge step forwards, this deal doesn't go far enough to adequately protect those on the frontlines of climate change. Poorer people around the world have been struggling with the effects of climate change for years now. More action is needed to support, protect, and truly stand with those being hit first and worst.

The *For The Love Of...* campaign is being organised by the Climate Coalition, a coalition made up of over 100 organisations; from environment and development charities, such as Oxfam, to unions, faith organisations and community and women's groups. The campaign asks all citizens, including young people, to make clear to their MPs and the government that we care about climate change and the impacts it is having. Building this mandate will help to persuade the government to play its full part in ensuring that the ambitious targets agreed in Paris are achieved and that the most vulnerable people around the world receive the support they need to cope with climate impacts.



Sheltering from the storm in Bwikhonge, Uganda. Local farmers have commented that the seasons are becoming unpredictable; 'You are never sure when rain will come, and how much will come...We cannot trust the weather.' Photo: Geoff Sawyer/Oxfam.

Teachers' Resources

The Curriculum

This resource is primarily designed for young people who wish to take action. It begins with a peer learning presentation and workshop about climate change. However, the presentation and workshop are brief and intended to supplement rather than cover the climate change curriculum content of geography or science. If you wish to teach climate change in detail you may find the following links useful:

- The Guardian: How to teach climate change: <http://bit.ly/1s5lCrf>
- Oxfam's climate change curriculum resources are at <http://bit.ly/1oIVe8p>
- The For The Love Of... video on Youtube (2' 25'"): <http://bit.ly/1kydrVF> The video will inspire thinking about the breadth of climate change's impact on everyday lives. However, other resources are required to more fully explore climate change in depth.
- The Guardian Teachers Network: The Environment <http://bit.ly/1o6xkDG> - search for the keyword 'climate change'
- TES Connect: Climate Change <http://bit.ly/UNndqs>
- The Science Museum's 'Climate Science Info Zone': <http://bit.ly/1v2560x>
- The Met Office Climate Guide: <http://bit.ly/1tS2pgH>

Policy and practice

Oxfam's Policy and Practice climate change blog has up-to-date case studies and debate about our work on climate change: <http://bit.ly/WWAP4F>

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report is the global go-to source for the latest research on climate change: <http://bit.ly/1p8ZQ8q>

Campaigning on climate change

The *For The Love Of...* campaign is calling for action on climate change to protect the things we love, from bees to the British coastline, to people everywhere. It is intended to engage both young people and adults with a more human and personal approach to climate change. Visit the website to find out more about what is affected and how to get involved in the campaign: <http://bit.ly/1gc4P24>

- The Climate Coalition website: <http://bit.ly/WWWE8sv>
- The Climate Coalition has national coalitions in Scotland and Wales. Refer to the relevant website for specific information about each nation.
- The Stop Climate Chaos Scotland website: <http://bit.ly/VyUZjP>
- The Stop Climate Chaos Cymru website: <http://bit.ly/YoUZo9>

Young people as campaigners

The key focus of this resource is on young people as active global citizens. The resource is primarily targeted at Oxfam Youth Ambassador Groups in schools and colleges (<http://bit.ly/1kzBR0Q>) but may also stand alone as a citizenship topic or as an additional activity following the study of climate change in science or geography.

- The Guardian Teachers network has a guide on how to teach political campaigning: <http://bit.ly/1kzB53W>. This provides support for young people to successfully engage their MPs and the press.
- Details of Oxfam's Youth Ambassadors badge and action guides can be found here: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/youth-ambassadors>

- Get Global remains a key resource for teaching active global citizenship through a skills based approach. It can be downloaded from <http://bit.ly/N2rHpi>



Young people raise their voices on climate change in the Houses of Parliament at the reception for the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence in December 2011.
Photo: John McLaverty/Oxfam.

Curriculum making

Climate change and how to best respond to it are increasingly complex, controversial and fast moving topics. The limited degree of coordinated global action so far, despite the threats climate change poses to all our livelihoods and lifestyles, means the topic is particularly suitable for critical thinking, open-ended questions and citizen action.

Debate has raged within policy and media circles not only about the most appropriate actions to combat climate change, but also how to best build the political consensus for these actions to take place. The interests of a large carbon-fuel exporting country, for example, appear diametrically opposed to those of a small island state threatened by rising sea levels. How can they be resolved?

Young people's voices and opinions from around the world are vital in the debates.

Teachers are encouraged to use the resources suggested in this guide and others to plan lessons. It is inevitable that the writing of textbooks and other published materials will lag behind events taking place in real time. Please share any resources you produce by emailing education@oxfam.org.uk.

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